



NEWS RELEASE

Roberto A. Villaseñor
Chief of Police

Contact: Pete Dugan
Sergeant / Public Information Office
520-791-4852
On-call PIO: tucsonpdpio@gmail.com
<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/police>

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KIDNAPPING 1000 BLOCK OF SOUTH FREEWAY ROAD

Detectives from the Tucson Police Department's Home Invasion Unit have been the lead investigative unit for this incident. After gathering evidence and interviewing the detained suspect, detectives arrested 41-year-old Engels Enrique Polanco. Mr. Polanco was booked into the Pima County Jail yesterday evening on one count each of Kidnapping, Aggravated Robbery and Auto Theft.

It was originally reported that the two suspects saw the Silver Alert and that Mr. Polanco called 911 to turn himself in. As the investigation continued, it was revealed that when the suspects saw the Silver Alert, Mr. Polanco called the hotel where the kidnapping originally took place. Mr. Polanco advised hotel staff that he had Mrs. Lee in Phoenix. At that point, a detective with the Home Invasion Unit got on the phone posing as a hotel employee. He was able to get information on the exact location of Mr. Polanco and Mrs. Lee. Phoenix Police then responded to that location and detained Mr. Polanco until Tucson Police Detectives arrived.



Engels Enrique Polanco



Polanco and 2nd Suspect



Second Suspect

Detectives are still trying to identify and locate the second suspect involved. The Tucson Police Department is asking anyone with information to call 88-CRIME. Additional information will be released as it becomes available.

Sergeant Pete Dugan – June 7, 2015

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Just after 4:00 a.m. this morning, officers from Operations Division Downtown responded to a hotel in the 1000 block of South Freeway Rd, reference the report of a possible kidnapping. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the individual who called 911. He advised that he and his wife were traveling home from California to Texas and stopped in Tucson to rest. He said he fell asleep in the hotel room the previous evening and when he woke up he noticed his wife, 68-year-old Kae-Soo Kim Lee was missing, along with their vehicle. The victim's husband further explained that his wife had advanced stages of Dementia and was not able to drive. Officers began searching for Mrs. Lee and the couple's vehicle. Detectives responded to the scene to continue the investigation. Video evidence from the hotel parking lot showed Mrs. Lee enter the parking lot just before 1:00 a.m. The video also showed two individuals approach Mrs. Lee and walk her to her vehicle. Mrs. Lee was placed into the front passenger seat, while the other two subjects got into the vehicle and drove away with her.

The Tucson Police Department immediately reached out to the local media outlets and posted the information on social media sites. Investigators also began the process of putting together a "Silver Alert" through the department of Public Safety. A Silver Alert is a public notification system to broadcast information about missing persons – especially senior citizens with Alzheimer's disease, Dementia, or other mental disabilities, in order to aid in their recovery. After receiving approval for the Silver Alert, Mrs. Lee's information as well as her vehicle information was broadcast throughout the state. Shortly after the alert went out, the suspects that had taken Mrs. Lee saw the alert on an electronic billboard in the Phoenix area. The suspects stopped at a convenience store and one of them called 911 to turn himself in. Phoenix police responded to the store and detained the suspect. Mrs. Lee was located and appeared to be in good physical condition. The other suspect fled before police arrived. Tucson Police officers transported Mrs. Lee's husband to Phoenix to reunite the couple. Investigators are speaking with the detained suspect to figure out a possible motive and to determine exactly what took place.

This was a superb example of law enforcement agencies working together to quickly end an extremely dangerous situation. Without the cooperation between agencies to get the Silver Alert out immediately, it is unknown how this investigation may have ended. This was the first time that the Silver Alert was used for a kidnapping situation and it turned out to be the key element that helped solve this case and bring Mrs. Lee home safely to her family. A special thanks to all who contributed with this investigation. Additional information will be released as it becomes available.